

to the action of the air and light, convert a portion of it into proper juice. A plant is nothing more than a multitude of buds or fixed embryos, which send their roots downwards to form their bark and wood. The leaf should be considered the most essential part of the plant, from which all its other parts are either directly or indirectly formed, as it is not an expansion of anything, but a very important organ, having as it were a distinct existence of its own.

A discussion ensued, in which Dr. Macreight, Dr. Willshire, and other Members joined.

WERNERIAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Wernerian Natural History Society, in a notice dated Edinburgh, 20th April 1839, offers Honorary Premiums, value 10*l.* each, open unconditionally to all scientific naturalists. It is understood that the successful Essays on the subjects proposed, and such Drawings and Specimens as accompany them, become the property of the Society; and that, in the event of the Society not publishing the Essays, the authors may be allowed to publish them on their own account.

Hydrography.—1. On the temperature, magnitude, chemical composition, and geological relations of the *Springs* of Scotland. 2. On the temperature, colour, chemical composition, mechanical admixture, magnitude, velocity, and alluvial formations of any one of the following *Rivers* in Scotland, viz. the Tweed, Tay, Dee in Aberdeenshire, or Spey.

Geology.—3. On the erratic blocks or boulders of Scotland and its Islands; their mineralogical and paleontological characters, and physical and geographical distribution; with illustrative maps.—4. On the mineralogical constitution and chemical composition of the Trap-Rocks of Scotland; with specimens.—5. On the chemical composition of the altered or metamorphic rocks met with in granite, porphyry, serpentine and trap districts; with specimens.—6. On the fossil organic remains found in the transition strata and carboniferous systems of Scotland; with drawings of new species and specimens required.—7. On the so-called *Raised Sea-Beaches* met with in Scotland, its Islands, and elsewhere. Specimens of the shells, &c. required.

Zoology.—8. On the entomology of the Three Lothians, and the river district of the Forth; with specimens.—9. Drawings and Descriptions of the microscopic animals inhabiting the waters of any of the following arms of the sea and lakes, viz. Firth of Forth, Firth of Clyde or Loch Fyne; or of Loch Lomond or Loch Tay.—10. On the natural history and comparative anatomy of the land and water

molluscos animals of the Firth of Forth district; with drawings, and, if possible, preparations.—11. On the anatomy and physiology of the respiratory and digestive organs of birds, from actual observation, with a special reference to the habits and manners, and the natural arrangement of families and genera; with characteristic specimens.

Botany.—12. On the botany of the mountains of Scotland, in connexion with their geological structure; with specimens and a map of the distribution. The range of elevation, and the northern and southern limits of species should be attended to, and any facts illustrating the geographical distribution of plants recorded. It would also add greatly to the interest of the communication if it were accompanied with a coloured geognostical map of the districts. The Essays to be written in English, French, or German.

[The subjects are rather numerous; and perhaps a fewer, with higher premiums, for some at least, might have been better. The preparations and drawings to illustrate some of them could not be made for double the amount of the premium: and many would be willing to compete for an honorary distinction who would not like to give up their collections.—ED.]

MISCELLANEOUS.

NOTICE OF AN UNCOMMONLY TAME AND SENSIBLE PINE MARTEN (*MUSTELA MARTES*). BY ST. K. VON SIEMUSZOVA-PIETRUSKI.

In June 1836 I obtained a very young Pine Marten, which in a short space of time became so domestic that he truly deserved the admiration of all who had an opportunity of seeing him. This pretty little animal went about freely through all the rooms of the house without doing harm to any one, played in the court-yard with my Danish dogs, often sprang upon their backs, and rode frequently upon the good patient beasts after the manner of monkeys in a very comical style for a good distance. The dogs too were very fond of the Marten, and never showed signs of their inherited hatred of such animals. In time he became so much attached to my person that he followed me everywhere, even into the neighbouring villages, just as only a dog or badger would do (see my remarks upon the badger in Wiegmann's Archiv, 1837, Part II.). In these walks it was very interesting to observe how he was able to overcome his natural innate propensity for climbing up trees; for it very frequently happened that the desire of climbing up a tree seized him; yet as

soon as he perceived that I had gone on, the little animal hastened after me directly. Even upon long excursions to the old forests of the Carpathian mountains, at a distance of three and four (German) miles, the Marten was my faithful companion; he swam through rivers and brooks with perfect ease like an otter: but the most remarkable thing besides was, that he never went very far from me; only once do I remember having lost him for some hours. This happened in the following manner.

On the 30th of August the gentle Marten followed me, as he always did on an excursion, into the part of the Carpathians which is called the Potoninen. I was busied in collecting the beautiful *Carabus Sacheri* in an enchanting spot, and quite forgot my Marten, who had found a nest with young blackbirds (*Merula montana*, Brehm.) just by, and was quietly devouring them. After a fortunate booty of Coleoptera I then wished to climb a lofty hill called Paraska, but I missed the Marten and continued my way without him. How great was my joy, upon my return, after eight long hours, to find the sensible animal again in the very meadow where I had lost him!

If I was absent from home this Marten would take no food the whole day long; and when I returned showed his joy by merry leaps and caresses.

He ate everything that came to table, bread, fruit, cheese, milk, but he was fondest of raw flesh; he drank wine with great relish, and plentifully. This even hastened his death, for once he drank so much, that on the following day he was found dead on the house floor.—*Wiegmann's Archiv für* 1839, 3tes Heft.

CLANGULA BARROVII, A NATIVE OF ICELAND.

On my last visit to Iceland, in the summer of 1837, I arrived there by way of Copenhagen on the 22nd of June, and landed at a place called Ociford, situate on the north side of the island. I immediately commenced making excursions into the interior for the purpose of procuring specimens and observing the habits of those birds which we are little acquainted with in Britain. I met with eleven species of ducks breeding there, and was fortunate in procuring the eggs of each, viz. *Anas mollissima*, *A. glacialis*, *A. Marila*, *A. Strepera*, *A. Boschas*, *A. acuta*, *A. Crecca*, *A. Penelope*, *A. nigra*, *A. histrionica*. The whole of the above visit Britain in the winter season, some remaining to breed, while others retire to higher latitudes; others again we are only acquainted with as rare and uncertain visitants to our shores.